

Text of Untermeyer's Address

Following is the text of Samuel Untermeyer's address last night over Station WABC after his return from Europe:

My Friends:

What a joy and relief and sense of security to be once more on American soil! The nightmares of horrors through which I have passed in those two weeks in Europe, listening to the heart-breaking tales of refugee victims, beggar description.

I deeply appreciate your enthusiastic greeting on my arrival today, which I quite understand is addressed not to me personally but to the holy war in the cause of humanity in which we are embarked, Jews and non-Jews alike, for we are equally concerned that the work of centuries shall not be undone, and that civilization shall not be allowed to die.

It is a war that must be waged unremittently until the black clouds of bigotry, race hatred and fanaticism that have descended upon what was once Germany, but is now medieval Hitlerland, have been dispersed. If we will but enlist to a man and persist in our purpose the bright sun of civilization will again shine upon Germany, and the world will be a safer place in which to dwell.

As our ship sailed up the bay today past our proud Statue of Liberty, I breathed a prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving that this fair land of freedom has escaped the curse that has descended upon benighted Germany, which has thereby been converted from a nation of culture into a veritable hell of cruel and savage beasts.

The World's Concern.

We owe it not only to our persecuted brethren but to the entire world to now strike in self-defense a blow that will free humanity from a repetition of this incredible outrage. This time the Jews are the victims, next time it may be the Catholics or the Protestants. If we once admit, as is brazenly insisted by the German Government, that such fiendish persecution of the people of one race or creed is an internal domestic affair and not a world concern, how are we to know whose turn will be next?

Now or never must all the nations of the earth make common cause against the monstrous claim that the slaughter, starvation and annihilation, by a country that has reverted to barbarism, of its own innocent and defenseless citizens without rhyme, reason or excuse is an internal affair against which the rest of the world must stand idly by and not lift a hand in defense.

I have seen and talked with many of these terror-stricken refugees who have had the good fortune to escape over the border, though forced to leave their property behind them, and I want to say to you that nothing that has seeped through to you over the rigid censorship and lying propaganda that are at work to conceal and misrepresent the situation of the Jews in Germany begins to tell a fraction of the frightful story of fiendish torture, cruelty and persecution that are being inflicted day by day upon these men, women and children, or the terrors of worse than death in which they are living.

When the tale is told, as it will be some day if the impotent League of Nations ever sufficiently awakens from its Rip Van Winkle slumbers to the realization of its power and duty to prosecute an investigation into the facts, the world will confront a picture so fearful in its barbarous cruelty that the hell of war and the alleged Belgian atrocities will pale into insignificance as compared to this devilishly, deliberately, cold-bloodedly planned and already partially executed campaign for the extermination of a proud, gentle, loyal, law-abiding people—a people who love and have shed their blood for their Fatherland, and to whom Germany owes in large part its prosperity and its great scientists, educators, lawyers, physicians, poets, musicians, diplomats and philosophers, who are the backbone of its past cultural life.

Back to Dark Ages.

But why dwell longer upon this revolting picture of the ravages wrought by these ingrates and beasts of prey, animated by the loathsome motives of race hatred, bigotry and envy. For the Jews are the aristocrats of the world. From time immemorial they have been persecuted and have seen their persecutors come and go. They alone have survived. And so will history repeat itself, but that furnishes no reason why we should permit this reversion of a once great nation to the Dark Ages or fail to rescue these 600,000 human souls from the tortures of hell, as we can with the aid of our Christian friends, if we have the will to act.

Protests and pleas from all corners of the earth, from the leaders of all creeds, having proven as vain and unavailing, as was the idealistic dream of our martyred President of making the world safe for democracy and of protecting minorities, what then are to be the lines of our defensive campaign against these atrocities, on which we are already actively embarked? Are we right in our plan? If so, what

steps shall now be prosecuted to attain success?

Our campaign is two-fold—defensive and constructive. On the defensive side will be the economic boycott against all German goods, shipping and services. On the constructive side will be an appeal to the League of Nations to construe and enforce the labor union provisions of the Versailles Treaty and the written promises made by Germany, while the treaty was under negotiation, to protect its minorities, which have been flagrantly violated by its disfranchisement and persecution of the German Jews.

What Boycott Means.

As to the boycott, strange to say a mere handful in number, but powerful in influence, of our thoughtless but doubtless well-intentioned Jews seem obsessed and frightened at the bare mention of the word "boycott." It signifies and conjures up to them images of force and illegality, such as have on occasions in the past characterized struggles between labor unions and their employers. As these timid souls are capitalists and employers, the word and all that it implies are hateful to their ears.

In point of fact, it signifies nothing of the kind. These gentlemen do not know what they are talking or thinking about. Instead of surrendering to their vague fears and half-baked ideas, our first duty is to educate them as to what is meant by a purely defensive economic boycott, and what we are doing and proposing. Admittedly, the boycott is our only really effective weapon. These gentlemen who are taking counsel of their groundless fears to the exclusion of their reason have done nothing and have no program except to attempt to arouse world opinion, which is and has been from the outset on our side, as it was bound to be because of this brutal, senseless, unprovoked assault upon civilization.

It is not necessary to belittle or underrate that accomplishment, if their aimless, fruitless endeavors in that direction may be so dignified in recognition of their good intentions, barren of results as they have been. It is sufficient that their efforts have proven unavailing and that the campaign of Schrecklichkeit not only goes on unabated in the face of unanimous world opinion but that it is increasing in intensity and that the masses of the German people, misled by government propaganda and suppression of free speech and of the press, are either voluntarily, or through fear of punishment at the hands of their despotic rulers, supporting their government in this hellish campaign.

What then have these amiable gentlemen accomplished and what do they hope or expect to accomplish in the way of stemming this conflagration of civilization by their "feather-duster" methods? You cannot put out a fire, and especially that kind of a fire, by just looking on until the mad flames, fanned by the wind of hate, have destroyed everything. What we are proposing and have already gone far toward doing, is to prosecute a purely defensive economic boycott that will undermine the Hitler régime and bring the German people to their senses by destroying their export trade on which their very existence depends.

"Force Them to Learn."

They have flaunted and persisted in flaunting and defying world opinion. We propose to and are organizing world opinion to express itself in the only way Germany can be made to understand. Hitler and his mob will not permit their people to know how they are regarded by the outside world. We shall force them to learn in the only way open to us.

Revolting as it is, it would be an interesting study in psychology to analyze the motives, other than fear and cowardice, that have prompted Jewish bankers to lend money to Germany as they are now doing. It is in part their money that is being used by the Hitler régime in its reckless, wicked campaign of propaganda to make the world anti-Semitic; with that money they have invaded Great Britain, the United States and other countries where they have established newspapers, subsidized agents and otherwise are spending untold millions in spreading their infamous creed.

The suggestion that they use that money toward paying the honest debts they have repudiated is answered only by contemptuous sneers and silence. Meantime the infamous campaign goes on unabated with ever increasing intensity to the everlasting disgrace of the Jewish bankers who are helping to finance it and of the weaklings who are doing nothing effective to check it.

The Hitler régime originated and are fiendishly prosecuting their boycott to exterminate the Jews by placarding Jewish shops, warning Germans against dealing with them, by imprisoning Jewish shopkeepers and parading them through the streets by the hundreds under guard of Nazi troops for the sole crime of being Jews, by ejecting them from the learned professions in which many of them had attained eminence, by excluding their children from the schools, their men from the labor

unions, closing against them every avenue of livelihood, locking them in vile concentration camps, starving and torturing them, murdering and beating them without cause and resorting to every other conceivable form of torture, inhuman beyond conception, until suicide has become their only means of escape, and all solely because they are or their remote ancestors were Jews, and all with the avowed object of exterminating them.

Appeal to Mankind.

As against this, the foulest boycott in the annals of time, we are appealing to all mankind to enforce a counter-boycott. That appeal is meeting with the conviction that idealism and justice are still alive.

There is nothing new in the use of the economic boycott as an instrument of justice. The covenant of the League of Nations expressly provides in these identical words for its use to bring recalcitrant nations to terms. President Roosevelt, whose wise statesmanship and vision are the wonder of the civilized world, is invoking it in furtherance of his noble conception for the readjustment of the relations between capital and labor under the terms of the sweeping Industrial Recovery Act, to the end that labor shall receive a more just share of the wealth it creates. He is about to enlist the consumers of the country in a national campaign in which they pledge themselves to boycott all manufacturers, jobbers and retailers who fail to subscribe to the codes and to buy only from those who have assented and who are thereby privileged to fly the blue eagle of NRA. What more exalted precedent do our timid friends want?

With this explanation of our aims, I appeal to the American Jewish Committee, whose public spirit and good intentions I do not for a moment question, but the wisdom of whose judgment I challenge, no longer to hold aloof but to rid themselves of their timid and ill-considered prejudices and join in actively pressing this boycott as our only weapon except the appeal to the League, which I shall discuss at a later time.

I purposely refrain from including the American Jewish Congress in this appeal because I am satisfied that 95 per cent of their members are already with us and that they are being misrepresented by two or three men now abroad. Of them I ask that, prior to the meeting to be held this month in Prague by their executive committee, they instruct these false leaders in no uncertain terms as to the stand they must take on this all-important subject and demand that they shall either openly represent their views or resign their offices. One of them, generally recognized as the king-pin of mischief makers, is junketing around the Continent engaged in his favorite pastime of spreading discord, asserting at one time and place that he favors and supports the boycott and at another that he is opposed or indifferent to it, all dependent on the audience he is addressing; but always directly or indirectly delivering a stab in the dark.

Progress So Far Made.

There is not time now, but I hope and expect in the near future to be able to report to you the steps that have been taken and that are already under way, and the surprising and gratifying progress already made in many countries toward the success of the economic boycott in which we are engaged. Although considerable progress in that direction has already been made in Great Britain and in the United States, you will be surprised to learn that they are the least advanced and as yet the most inadequately organized of all the countries that were represented at the Amsterdam World Economic Conference, where the boycott was unanimously and enthusiastically approved by formal resolution by a rising vote.

With us in America the delay has been due in part to lack of funds and the vast territory to be covered, but it is hoped and expected that this condition will soon be corrected. The object-lesson we are determined to teach is so priceless to all humanity that we dare not fail.

Each of you, Jew and Gentile alike, who has not already enlisted in this sacred war should do so now and here. It is not sufficient that you buy no goods made in Germany. You must refuse to deal with any merchant or shopkeeper who sells any German-made goods or who patronizes German ships or shipping. To our shame be it said that there are a few Jews among us, but fortunately only a few, so wanting in dignity and self-respect that they are willing to travel on German ships where they are despised and meet with the just contempt of the servants who wait upon them and of their fellow passengers. Their names should be heralded far and wide. They are traitors to their race.

In conclusion, permit me again to thank you for this heartening reception and to assure you that, with your support and that of our millions of non-Jewish friends, we will drive the last nail in the coffin of bigotry and fanaticism that has dared raise its ugly head to slander, belie and disgrace twentieth century civilization.